Sultan
Awadh died in 1909 and was succeeded by his son Ghalib, a man of advanced views, who was extremely anxious for the development of his country in which he established peace and good order. His application for, and financing of, a mission to investigate agricultural and mineral resources of his country deserves special mention. He approached the High Commissioner for Egypt, and in 1919 Mr. O. H. Little was sent to report on the mineral resources and Mr. H. M. Heald on the agriculture. Mr. Little's report appeared in 1925, "The Geography and Geology of Mukalla," and the results of the agricultural survey appear in Mr. Heald's official report.

Sultan Ghalib died, universally regretted, in 1922, and was succeeded by his brother 'Umar, whose achievements will sufficiently appear elsewhere in this report. The present Sultan, whose accession to the Mukalla state was determined by the will of Sultan Ghalib, succeeded his uncle in March 1936.

The late Qu'aiti Sultan was absent from the country during my visit, and in fact the greater part of his reign was spent in India. Just prior to my visit, however, he had performed a tour of the Hadhramaut, and this was the first occasion on which a reigning Sultan had undertaken the journey. Leaving Mukalla on 29th July, His Highness, who was accompanied by his *Wazir*, other officials, 200 soldiers and a brass band, arrived at Wadi Du'an on 4th August. He stayed in Du'an six days and left for Hajarein on the 10th August. The party reached Hajarein on the evening of the 11th, and next day left by car for Meshhed. On the 14th, Hureidha was reached and Haura the same evening. On the 15th, His Highness proceeded to Al Qatn where he spent two days, and left on the 17th for Shibam where he stayed seven days, during which the Kathīri Sultan visited him with a large retinue and invited him to the Kathīri part of the wadi. Sultan 'Umar arrived at Seiyun on the 24th and was well received. He proceeded next day to Tarim, and on the 26th visited 'Einat, returning to Tarim the same day. On the 27th he returned to Shibam, where he stayed a further week before going to Al Qatn on 3rd September. On his way back to Mukalla, which he reached on the 14th, Sultan 'Umar visited

---

The Naqib succeeded in procrastinating until his troops returned from Du'an, when war ensued and the Qu'aitis were defeated. This war was known as the Nusfia or struggle for half the share.

The Qu'aiti then had resort to the British Government who ordered the Naqib to pay the amount claimed. On his failure he was removed from Mukalla, and thus in al Hijja 1290 (A.D. 1882) Mukalla and its dependencies came into the possession of 'Abdulla and 'Awadh bin 'Umar.

In Muharram 1307 (1888) the Qu'aiti entered into a treaty with the British, and was recognised as Sultan of Mukalla and its dependencies. When 'Abdulla died, there was a dispute between 'Awadh and the sons of 'Abdulla as to the paramountcy. The British Government intervened and ordered the removal of 'Abdulla's sons in consideration of compensation to be paid. Then Sultan 'Awadh and his descendants became the rulers of the whole country.

643 Henin and the Nahd tribe. During his tour he arranged the
484 following truces: At 'Einat, on 26th August, a two years' truce between the Seiyids of Āl Hussein and Āl al Hamed; at Al Qatn on 5th September a truce between all the Yafa'i tribesmen and their clans and sections to last five years; on 6th September at the same place, a 10 years' truce between the tribesmen of Āl Makhashin of the Nahd, and another of five years between the clan of Āl Mahfudh, and, again at Al Qatn, on 7th September, an eight months' truce between the Nahd tribesmen; on 9th September in Wadi al 'Ain a truce of five years between the tribesmen of Āl Batati, and another of five years between the Āl Batati and Āl Mahfudh.

643 His Highness left for India on 15th October 1934 for medical reasons. He did not return to Mukalla again, for he died in India of cancer, after a long and painful illness, in March 1936. Recognition has now been given to his nephew and successor, His Highness Sultan Salih bin Ghalib al Qu'aiti, who has been accorded a salute of 11 guns.

CHAPTER V.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IN THE HADHRAMAUT.

173 I have already drawn attention to the importance of a knowledge
829 of traditional history, and there is one aspect of history in particular of which any one dealing with Arabs must have some knowledge, and that is genealogy. Arabs would regard families going back to the Conquest as mushroom growths, and many can carry their own trees back to Adam. Each one will at least know the main lines of his descent, and though in its earlier stages it is legendary, this is of no importance to others than purists, for it is believed. Wherever known, the origin of each tribe is indicated in this report, and genealogical trees show the accepted descent of tribal ancestors from Shem.

829 Racially, the Arabs divide themselves into four categories, of
173 which three are represented in the Hadhramaut, the Baida or ex-
162 tinct Arabs represented by the sons of 'Ad, the 'Ariba or descend-
565 ants of Qahtan or Joktan embracing all the remaining Arabs except the Seiyids and a few sons of Ma'ad who, being descended from Ishmael, are Musta 'Ariba.

The population of the Hadhramaut may be divided into seven social classes, almost castes. They are not all represented in every part of the country, and the order in which they appear below is partly historical and partly represents the order of their importance.

SEIYIDS.

162 The Seiyids of the Hadhramaut derive their descent from Ahmed
565 bin 'Isa al Mohajir who migrated to the Hadhramaut from Basra and died there about 1,050 years ago. His grave is on the right bank of the main Wadi Hadhramaut at Al Hasisa, a few miles

1: Ingrams G-5 (1934-35)1936 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

CHAPTER VIII.

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT IN THE HADHRAMAUT.

Roads and Road Transport.

Despite the fact that of late years the motor-car has become a familiar object in parts of the Hadhramaut, the camel and the ass are still the principal means of conveyance for man and goods in the country, and although the tracks suitable for cars are certain to be increased, the bulk of the interior trade will continue to be carried in the traditional Arabian fashion. Increase of motor tracks will, in fact, probably mean increased earnings to caravan men, as there will be more goods to distribute over short carries off the main routes.

The principal caravan routes are :—

Mukalla (donkey route)—Tila—Zemen as Saghir—Hisi—Dahma—Jol Ubeid—Wadi Du'an—Sif—Hajarein—Meshhed—Haura—Hauta (Al Qatn)—Shibam.

Mukalla (camel route)—Rashnid—Haj Bal Qabrein—Kheila—Wadi Du'an—Sif—Hajarein—Meshhed—Haura—Hauta (Al Qatn)—Shibam.

Mukalla—Gheil Ba Wazir—Sufeila—Nihār—Sāh—Shibam—Seiyun.

Mukalla—Harshiat — Tokhm — Bagha — Jirwit—Batha—Marsa Mukalla—'Umn 'Ainein—Bawerqat—Haura—Hauta—Shibam—Seiyun—Seheil Qibli—Tarim—'Einat.

Mukalla—Fuwwa—Kherba—Bahth—Yuwan.

Mukalla—Fuwwa—Kherba—Bahth—Kanina—Sidara.

Shihr—Gheil Ba Wazir—Ma'di—Reida—Had al Jabir—Herū—Mesenda—Tarim—Maseilat as Silma—Qahir—'Einat.

Shihr—Gheil Ba Wazir—Ma'di—Reida—Had al Jabir—Herū—Mesenda—Tarim—Seiyun.

Shihr—Ras 'Aqabat al 'Arsha—'Abul—'Ais—Gheil bin Yamin—Herū—Wadi Na'r—Husn bin Dhoban—Tarim.

Seihut (camels only)—Al 'Ais—Semarma—Al Gheil—Buzūn—Teheir—Maqrat—Al Qoz—Bin Qora—Morheih—Hanun—Bin Sheikh Nān—Hamir—Tabūrkum—Sena—'Qabr Hud—Fughma—As Som—Qasm—'Einat—Tarim.

Shibam—Husn al 'Abr—Nejran—San'a.

Shibam—Shabwa—San'a.

Shibam—Yab'uth—San'a.

There are also caravans to and from Merkha, Hadhina, Joba, Beihan, and Harib.

Caravans from Mukalla reach Du'an in about six days, and from Shihr and Mukalla arrive at the principal towns of the Wadi Hadhramaut in up to ten days. Caravans from Mukalla to Hajr take three days. Caravans travelling between Shibam and San'ā take fourteen or fifteen days over the journey with loaded camels.

481 It is four days journey from Shibam to Husn al 'Abr and five days from Husn al 'Abr to Nejran.

485 Routes from the coast are well provided with *siqayas*, or public fountains, near villages, and *qarifs* and *naqbas*, artificial pools and cisterns for rain-water, in the desert places. There are also of course many natural springs and water holes in the wadis. There are *muraba'as* (rest houses, called *madharab* in the low country and *sira* in the upper) at intervals approximately of a few hours' journey all over the principal routes crossing barren country. There are no definitely appointed stages, but caravans halt at places where they can graze and water their camels. They travel an average of six or seven hours a day.

412 From fifty to fifty-three thousand camels leave the camel park
489 called Therb outside the west gate of Mukalla every year for the interior. From Shihr the number is from 30,000 to 32,000. These figures include 5,000 to 8,000 in the former case and 2,000 in the latter of camels carrying food for the camel-men. Camels for this purpose are provided at the rate of about two to ten loaded camels.

Departures from and to the coast take place almost daily except during the month of Ramadhan. During that month caravans leave Mukalla and Shihr in order to arrive at their destinations by the feast day. Departures from and arrivals at Shibam for and from the interior are not so frequent.

From four hundred to a thousand loaded camels a month enter Shibam alone from the coast. It is estimated that a thousand annually come from San'ā in three or four caravans, but, as stated elsewhere, there is an increase if there is a demand.

An estimate given of the number of camels from other parts of the Protectorate and other parts of the Yemen is fourteen caravans of 1,000 camels each arriving mostly during the winter and spring. Caravans from Nejran are rare.

494 The 1934 fares from Mukalla to Du'an were as follows:—

484
435 1. By donkey, *watā* and *'aser*, that is to say, riding over level country and over the rough and hilly places, standard rate. 15 to 16 dollars, but with variation according to weight, the limits each way being from 12 to 20 dollars.

2. By donkey, *watā*, i.e., riding only over the level country, standard fare, 10 to 11 dollars with limits according to weight of from 8 to 15 dollars.

Each passenger is allowed free transport of up to three *frasilas* (1 *frasila* = 20 lb.) of food.

3. By camel, *watā* and *'aser*, 10 dollars.

4. By camel, *watā*, 5 dollars.

There is no allowance for weight by camel but there is a free allowance of up to three *frasilas* of food.

The freight rates are: By camel, 10 dollars for 1 *bahar* of 20 *frasilas*; by donkey, 1½ dollars a *frasila*.

1: Ingrams G-5 (1934-35)1936 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

Besides the payment of fares, rations have to be provided for the men at the rate of one man for one animal in the case of donkeys, and one man for up to three animals for camels. For donkey-men the rations cost from ½ to 1½ dollars a head according to whether they eat with the passengers or not. For camel men the cost of the rations is 2 dollars a head as they take eight days over the journey instead of six.

Other normal fares are: Shibam to Ba Rumeidan 5 dollars a camel, the normal fare, but I was asked 25 dollars a camel, 5 dollars for the *muqaddam*, and 30 dollars for the Beduins' broker to accompany the caravan. Tarim to Seihut 20 dollars a camel. This route necessitated two *siyaras*, each costing 10 dollars, and a Seiyid who had to be given 60 dollars.

The Du'an route is worked by the Marāshida and Khāmâ. The Wadi Leisar route by the Hālka, and the Wadi al 'Ain route by the 'Awābitha.

Motor Transport.

The following tracks are passable and regularly used by cars:—

	Miles.
Mukalla—seashore—Wadi Tifat—Landing ground—Fuwwa	9
Mukalla—shore—Wadi Mubekha—Sherij Bashhar—Wadi Tifat—Fuwwa—Lermi—Kherba	15·2
Mukalla—along the shore—Hali	12
Mukalla—Manawarih—Sherij Bashhar—Fuwwa—Lermi—Kherba	16·75
Mukalla—Dis al Mukalla—An Naq'a—Baqrein—Bakezebur	4
Mukalla—Dis al Mukalla—An Naq'a—Wadi Seded—Wadi Rukub—Buweish—Wadi al Feleq—Reida landing ground—Wadi Huweira—Shiheir—Wadi Ghasam—Gheil Ba Wazir	33·6
Mukalla—Khalf—Ras Mukalla—shore—Shihr (this route passes close to Shiheir and is an alternative route to Gheil Ba Wazir from either Mukalla or Shihr)	42·1
Mukalla—Dis al Mukalla—An Naq'a—Bir Ba Zambur—Harshiat—Tila as Sufla	10·4
Shihr—Dufeigha	2·7
Shihr—Wadi Rahba—Tubala	5·6
Shihr—Wadi Karangahem—Habis—Gheil Ba Wazir (to Habis 12 miles)	24
Shihr—Dis—Ras al Qarn	
Shibam—Hauta (al Qatn)—Haura—Meshhed—Hajarein	
Shibam—Hedhira—Hauta (Al Qatn)—Farudh—Henin (this route continues to Hureidha)	25

1: Ingrams G-5 (1934-35)1936 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

mean that his position *vis à vis* the Confederation is wholly negligible. The influence that an individual ruler exerts over a confederation of tribesmen depends to a large extent on the personality of the individual and I found plenty of evidence that Sultan 'Ali bin Mansur is universally respected, admired, and held in affection amongst the Shenafir tribesmen. Even though his word is not universally law his services are much sought in mediation between different factions, and there is no lack of factions in the Confederation. Along the length of the valley from the east of Shibam to the east of Tarim, which is considered Kathīri, village after village is a small city-state on its own. It is difficult to pass from one to another, even now that the motor-car has come, without the traditional *siyar* or escort.

Typical of the situation has been the state of war that has existed for some time between the Āl 'Umar and Āl 'Āmr clans. They have centred round the respectably-sized town of Al Ghurfa between Shibam and Seiyun. Five or six years ago some of the tribesmen of the Āl 'Umar started interfering with the inhabitants of Al Ghurfa. Bin 'Abdat, the *'aqīl* of the Āl 'Āmr, protested to Salim bin Ja'fer, the *'aqīl* of the Āl 'Umar, and proposed that they should unite to make peace in Al Ghurfa. Hitherto disputes in the town were commonly referred to the settlement of one Sheikh Bā Abūd, but this arrangement appears to have broken down. Bin 'Abdat informed Bin Ja'fer that if he would not help him, he (Bin 'Abdat) would establish control in the town himself. As Bin Ja'fer did not give him support he took action himself and established order. The new state of affairs was not popular, and probably resulted in some further disorder which had its repercussions beyond local limits. At this juncture the Qu'aiti *wazir* came to Shibam and brought pressure on Sultan 'Ali bin Mansur to unite with him and Salim bin Ja'fer in compelling Bin 'Abdat to vacate Al Ghurfa, and retire to his original place outside. Sultan 'Ali bin Mansur marched against Bin 'Abdat with one gun and some troops; Seiyid Hussein, the Qu'aiti *wazir*, also brought a gun and some troops from Shibam, Salim bin Ja'fer brought his own men, and the three forces collected at Al Ghiyel. The town of Al Ghurfa was bombarded, and, as it was described to me, " they had a good battle but without success ".

Seiyid Hussein, the *wazir*, retired after having successfully complicated the issue, and Sultan 'Ali immediately followed suit, leaving Bin 'Abdat and Bin Ja'fer to fight it out together. Both sides entrenched themselves. The elaborate system of fortifications and communication trenches, still visible at Al Ghurfa, reminded me strongly of France. They extend over nearly a mile, and in this small patch of the valley both sides lived an uncomfortable life for several years. Any cultivation that was done was done under difficulties, and the fields could only be approached through trenches. Salim bin Ja'fer enlivened the proceedings by importing a sort of armoured car from Java. This is now derelict

8: Pike N-4 (no date) 1940 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

mount steadily, until travel at midday becomes unpleasant and is not even practiced by the thoroughly accustomed Bedouins. At the peak of summer, travel is reduced to a minimum, and that undertaken only at night, probably more out of consideration for the Bedouin's valued beast of burden than for himself. A period of extreme heat lasting about forty days, known as the "arbainia" (*arba*, Arabic for "four"), usually begins about May 4, and there is another period of eight days later in the year.

The atmosphere, especially on the Jol, is exceptionally clear, save when an occasional dust storm darkens the sky. The dust storms affect large areas, for the wind-borne material is fine and easily distributed; but they do not extend to high altitudes. Fliers over the Jol report that at a few thousand feet above ground level the air normally remains clear. When moisture-laden winds are blowing landward from the Gulf of Aden, cloud banks cover the narrow coastal zone between the sea and the precipitous margin of the interior plateau.

Few or no instrumental data are at hand regarding rainfall in this part of Arabia. Heald, who reported on the agriculture of the Hadhramaut in 1921, says:

> The rain-fall along the coast is practically nil, some years they have one or two inches, but useless for agriculture, the floods being from the interior rain a long distance from Mukalla; when we were in the district from December to April, we had two or three showers, but every time too small for the rain gauge to measure.[1]

The Plateau and Its Borders

In the Hadhramaut the narrow, sandy coast is bordered by a belt of mountains 30 miles wide. At the western edge of the Hadhramaut, about 100 miles east of Aden, rugged coast ranges rise to 7000 or 8000 feet. They are succeeded on the east by slightly lower table-topped and scarp-bounded mountains, whose height gradually decreases to about 2000 feet at Ras Fartak.

Between these mountains and the interior desert of Rub' al Khali, the southern border of which runs parallel to the coast at a distance of 200 miles, stretches a highly dissected and terraced tableland, sloping very gently to the north and east. Dissection is greatest in the Hadhramaut, Maseila, and Hafif drainage basins; the fringe of the interior desert shows considerably less erosion. The eastward slope of the plateau has an average gradient of 1 in 500 (in the 610 kilometers between Hafif and Shabwa the surface rises from sea level to 1200 meters). The over-all northward component of slope is less, perhaps 1 in 1000; it cannot be determined because the altitude of the Rub' al Khali is not known. The gradient is not uniform,

[1] Quoted by W. H. Ingrams: A Report on the Social, Economic and Political Condition of the Hadhramaut, *Colonial No. 123*, London, 1936, p. 8.

8: Pike N-4 (no date) 1940 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

usually owns one or two dromedaries and with these joins other 492
[illegible]ates in moving cargo both to and from the coast. Flour, 438
[illegible]tea, cloth, timber, and dates, in which the country is not 439
[illegible]t, are brought to the Hadhramaut from distant lands

[291
411]
[177

FIG. 22—The Sultan of Qishn, accompanied by three Bedouin councilors, is attired in a turban and wears a curved dagger in his belt. Mr. W. H. Ingrams is at the extreme right. Note the Bedouins' well formed features and general attire, especially the sarong, which has been introduced by Hadhrami emigrants returning from the Malay States.

by sailing dhows and tramp steamers. A large part of the cargo, together with locally produced dried fish and fish oil, is distributed by caravan to the interior. Because exports—chiefly skins—are meager, the caravans must make their return journey empty or, at best, only lightly laden. The balance of exchange necessary to pro- 457
vide the excess imports is obtained from the remittances of thousands 167
who have emigrated and are now living abroad, chiefly in the Malay States and along the east coast of Africa.

There are two methods of contracting for the services of a caravan 484 •
and its many owners, each of whom insists on feeding, caring for, [437]
packing, and driving his own beast of burden—either by the day or for a fixed sum between certain points along a prescribed route. The latter plan is preferable, since it precludes any possible benefit to the camel owner from slow travel; but even with an incentive to progress he hesitates to push his animals more than 12 miles a day, and he is skilled in the fabrication of excuses. The men argue at great length about their respective loads before the morning start. A favorite maneuver is to put a slow camel at the head of the line. The inexperienced traveler may also be sidetracked by tales that no

8: Pike N-4 (no date) 1940 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

pasture lies beyond a certain point; or at noonday halts the camels become "temporarily lost."

Moonlit nights are considered most desirable for travel. Camels are grazed wherever pasture is most abundant, regardless of the time of day—the heat may be intense—or the progress of the journey. This would not be necessary if small quantities of fodder, such as millet and hay, were carried. This practice, however, is not popular, owing either to custom or to what may be considered unwarranted expense, despite the fact that the animals could be maintained in superior condition and at the same time be worked harder to a degree that would more than offset the cost of purchased fodder.

On the march camelmen provide for their own maintenance with small amounts of dates, bread, coffee, and tea, which add little to the burden a caravan can transport. Therefore, provided the equipment of a traveling group is not too cumbersome and the personnel not too large, the unit can maintain itself on the march four or five weeks without replenishing supplies. Speed of travel will be governed by local grazing, water supply, and terrain, the condition of the camels, and the "temperament" of the caravan leader—an unknown usually capable of "adjustment."

In the caravans of those not strictly limited in resources, the donkey is invariably included because it is comparatively easy to ride and a more comfortable mount than a camel. Camels can be hired for 1.00 to 1.25 Maria Theresa dollars (the standard currency in the interior) a day and donkeys for about 1.00 dollar.

Bedouin "Warfare"

It is common knowledge that caravans have been both successfully and unsuccessfully raided; but just what tactics the Bedouins employ on such occasions is somewhat of a mystery. At 4.00 a. m. one day a small party was plodding silently through bushes and mist along a broad wadi bottom leading to the sea. Through a knowledge of the prevailing wind as revealed by ripple marks in the sand, the leader cautiously picked his way and at length found a faint trail incised in the bank. About 10.00 a. m. the caravan came to rest in the spotted shade of a leafless camel's-thorn for the customary noontime forage; and while the camels fed on the sharp, crunchy thorns, the Bedouins reclined on the sand in the meager shade of the dry branches.

Without apparent warning the whole camp was suddenly alive, for downwind had come a faint call, which one man had been alert enough to catch. The sharp-eyed Bedouins soon discovered two minute figures on the crest of a distant dune overlooking the caravan route ahead; and it was at once recalled that this route followed a tribal boundary between two groups now rumored to be unfriendly. The

8: Pike N-4 (no date) 1940 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

strangers were assumed to be enemy scouts, the advance guard of a larger fighting force behind some distant dune.

The "ambushed" caravan comprised sixteen Bedouins, only twelve of them armed. This fact, however, the theoretically opposing force was supposed not to know, since it is an unwritten law of the desert that every Bedouin travels with rifle and ammunition. Without hesitation the leader selected three armed men to act as scouts and an unarmed messenger. Hastily the four men washed down a few mouthfuls of food, since they did not know when they would be able to eat again, filled with water from the large reservoir skins some small ones suitable for short, flying trips, and then slipped swiftly off across the sand in a peculiar bowlegged glide. Under cover of a near-by dune the caravan men scrambled to its summit, at once opened fire, and drove the two intruders from view. They then dashed ahead to the dune on which their adversaries had stood and later advanced from hilltop to hilltop parallel to the caravan route and between it and "enemy" territory. In the meantime the camels had been hastily packed and started on the march along the now protected trail, which they followed without intermission until sundown.

The two "enemy" tribesmen were not seen again, and it was concluded that their actions had been misinterpreted. Freedom from molestation during the remainder of the day did not, however, cause the caravan leader to relinquish vigilance. The party was scheduled to pass at about 3.00 p. m. a water hole to one side of the trail and hidden from it by a dune. As a method of precaution an advance guard of four went ahead and, just as the caravan came abreast of this spot, converged on the well from four directions. Although the strategy displayed by the Bedouins and their chief was happily unnecessary, the "shadow" campaign showed how fearless and cautious these men of the desert can be.

Fishers and Ropemakers

During certain of the winter months sardines abound along the Hadhramaut coast, traveling in large schools, which can be seen from the shore as black patches on the surface of the sea. Natives wade out with hand nets or cast from small canoes, making enormous hauls with considerable ease. The sardines are much appreciated by the Bedouins as an addition to their diet of dates, millet, and goat or sheep meat and are eaten either raw or cooked. The fish are taken from the nets, tossed up on the beach to dry, and then packed into large bundles for transport to the interior, where they are used for camel fodder or fertilizer. Fish oil is obtained from that part of the catch which is dumped into pits and allowed to decompose. Sting rays, sharks, porpoises, and lobsters are also taken from the sea; but as the use of lobster is unknown, it is cast back from the nets.

14: van der Meulen T-4 (1931) 1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

Berg's book written in 1886 was recommended to me by the governor of Aden as the best source of information they had at the government office at Aden. I also found that at that time the Royal Air Force was making use of Van den Berg's sketch-map in the scouting flights which they made over Hadramaut, and had corrected but few serious faults in it.

The attention of travelers in Arabia has been directed chiefly to the Hejaz and to what is known as Arabia Felix (Yemen), the center of civilization in former times. For this reason Hadramaut has been somewhat neglected, and also because it was so difficult to get into the interior. This was a closed land, not only for Christians but for strangers in general. The first explorer of Hadramaut was Adolph von Wrede, who made his memorable journey in 1843, disguised as an Egyptian Moslem. He was able to penetrate only as far as the entrance to Hadramaut itself, but he brought back with him very valuable material in regard to the region between the shore of the Indian Ocean and the actual valley of Hadramaut. However, in his native land (Germany) he was considered as an impostor, and it was not until 1873 that his "Reise in Hadhramaut" was published by von Maltzan.

It was not until January, 1893, that a second traveler attempted to follow the illustrious example of von Wrede. After months of futile efforts and journeys along the coast, it was Leo Hirsch's good fortune to get into the country and to penetrate to the interior. He reached the town of Terim, but had to leave that place immediately, owing to the threats of the Sayyids and the populace. In 1897 he published his very accurate reports on his journey.

Shortly after Hirsch, in December, 1893, an English married couple, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Bent, tried to visit the Hadramaut valley. They did not get as far as Hirsch, and had to turn back from Shibām. The Hadramaut sanctuary of the tomb of the prophet Hūd, and the mysterious well, Bīr Barhūt, would continue for

14: van der Meulen T-4 (1931) 1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

some decades longer to be exempt from the visit of a Christian.

This ends the list of the explorers of Hadramaut. The Royal Air Force did indeed make several scouting flights from Aden over Hadramaut, but they never made a landing, and sometimes had to fly very high. To these flights, however, we are indebted for a very important series of photographs, which provide valuable geographical material (see *The Geographical Journal,* vol. lxxvii, No. 3, March, 1931).

When I was given the task of visiting this country, which is so little known, and so important to us (Hollanders) in view of the tens of thousands of people from Hadramaut who live in the Netherlands Indies, I took steps to make more of the journey than could be accomplished by one government official who is not in any way an expert. I sent an invitation to Dr. H. von Wissmann of the Geographical Institute connected with the University of Vienna, asking him to venture with me upon the hazardous journey to Hadramaut. I had become acquainted with von Wissmann through his exploration work in the Hejaz and Yemen. He was to make the survey of the journey, and to carry out all instrumental and scientific observations, and we would work together on the collections of plants and insects and in taking photographs. Moreover I was able to offer him the assistance of an official introduction from the Dutch government, my knowledge of the Arabic and Malay languages, and that special help which a former government official from the Dutch Indies might hope for in the country of the Hadramaut people.

When I met von Wissmann at Aden in April of this year (1931), I had just completed a trip along the shores of the Red Sea. Both of us had received very unfavorable information in regard to present conditions in Hadramaut. Practically no one gave us any hope of success. However, the English authorities at Aden

14: van der Meulen T-4 (1931) 1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

boundary of the region of the āl-Qa'ētī, and were advised to trust to the āl-Kathīr. About five days were considered necessary to get our caravan together, and these days were made use of for making a botanical collection on the limestone hills behind Makalla.

Von Wissmann made profile sketches of the hills, and made observations to get a good base for his road survey. We were thankful to make use of the permission granted us by the authorities to make a trip for two days along the coast to ash-Shihr, which was formerly the most important harbor. Even a short distance inland from Makalla the country becomes unsafe. We were taken in a sort of auto-bus belonging to the sultan round the inland side of the mass of rock at Makalla, after that close along the shore, and finally even along the flat sandy shore. The bus was quite full of armed guards. We were forbidden to go by the road over the mountains, since on that road some soldiers had been killed from an ambush a short time before.

We were thankful when, after many negotiations with the leaders of our caravan, the signal for departure could be given on the afternoon of May 8. From early morning until the afternoon the vizier had had to negotiate with a group of Bedouins, who were waiting for our caravan among the rocks near the road, just outside the whitewashed boundary marks of the town of Makalla, in order to satisfy a blood-feud. The vizier knew how to bargain for a safe passage, but to be quite safe he had us taken in a government auto to a point beyond the border. In the darkness of night we were set down by the side of the road to wait for our donkeys!

The journey to the inaccessible and fanatical land of Hadramaut was now begun. From the 9th to the 15th of May we traveled northwards,—first through the Wādī Himim. Finally we came to the terrible, monotonous plateau with table-mountains, known as *jōl*. For many days we marched over this limestone plateau with its basin-like depressions and its very scant vegetation.

every year pilgrims assemble there from all those regions, and both before and after that a Truce of God prevails during an appointed period, in this country which is rent asunder by mutual warfare. Never before had a Christian been able to get further than Terīm in the direction of this sanctuary, and without the protection and the planning of the powerful Sayyid Abu Bakr Al Kāf we should not have succeeded. On the way to Qabr Hūd we passed the magnificent ruined castles of ʂl-'Urr and Thōbe, and the remains of houses and a cemetery at Makēnun. Qabr Hūd seemed to be a silent and defunct little town, with great houses which are only occupied for three days in a year. In the bed of the *wādī* there appeared to be water here, but before it reaches the sea it is said to disappear underground or else to dry up. The grave of Hūd, the great preacher of repentance in Hadramaut, is adorned with a dome which impresses one by its simplicity and beauty. The other sacred buildings are equally beautiful and are well kept. Where we had expected to find a Bedouin sanctuary which was neglected and primitive and surrounded by mud huts for the pilgrims, we found instead on the border of Arabia's "empty quarter," far away from the world, a sanctuary built and cared for with devotion and great talent.

We entered still further into the branch valley of Barhūt, and at the end of this *wādī* we saw at a height of about one hundred meters above the bottom of the valley the dark yawning chasm of the Bīr Barhūt, of which even the ancient geographers furnished descriptions, and definitely anticipated that there must be here the crater of a great volcano. After an investigation of two hours in the dark passages, arches and tunnels of Bīr Barhūt we were able to determine that we have here to deal with an ordinary limestone cave. Nowhere in this region did we see any trace of volcanic action. It was only in the broken ridge of mountains on the coast that we saw many traces of volcanic action. Further north the strata are horizontal; a layer of limestone about

18:Ingrams G-3 (1934-36)1938 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

1933. In these last eighteen months however, and particularly during the last winter, the number of visitors, official and otherwise, runs into over one hundred, in fact, into several hundreds if naval visitors and tourists on the coast are included, for Mukalla has recently had the fresh experience of seeing bus loads of tourists from steamers driving through its street.

The more frequent and more intensive incursion of European visitors is of course in itself a great contrast with the recent past, but I think that the contrast which most strikes visitors who have returned to the country in the past year is the comparatively peaceful conditions which now prevail. Little more than a year ago every Badawin and tribesman in the country carried his rifle with him, even to walk across the street. Blood feuds were widespread, and even harmless travellers of the unarmed classes were at times likely to lose not only their property but their lives. Travellers by motor car had to take with them an escort when passing from village to village. In places there were extensive systems of trenches to pass from the villages to the fields, and I know of people who have spent as much as twenty years without getting beyond their own doors.

Now however all this has passed and it is comparatively rarely that you see a tribesman carrying a rifle, indeed many of them do not even carry the *jambiyas* or curved daggers which are almost as much a part of their dress as a walking-stick was of ours. How all this has come to pass is more a matter of the history of the Hadhramaut than its geography, but I should simply like to say that it was largely through the will of the people who have a genuine desire for peace and for the following of peaceful pursuits.

This new peace has resulted in a much greater contact between tribes and between different parts of the country and has made possible a great extension in communications. Eighteen months ago there were about half a dozen motors on the coast and about sixty in the interior, carried up by camels. By the completion of the Al Kaf road Tarim has been linked with Shihr and passenger-carrying lorries ply almost daily between the coast and the interior. When I left the country a couple of months ago there were at least two hundred motor vehicles in it and every ship was bringing one or two. Many more car tracks have been made and cars now go to almost all parts of the Hadhramaut, westwards to Al 'Abr and eastwards to As Som as well as up or down branch wadis. The Mukalla Government is also constructing another remarkably good motor road to the Hadhramaut which is being built northwards from Mukalla and southwards from Du'an. Something over 20 miles of the former and 10 of the latter had been completed when I left; about 60 miles remains to be done, of which the greater part is over the flat *jols* and offers no particular difficulties of construction. Starting from Mukalla you can now motor at least 300 miles in the Hadhramaut without recrossing your tracks, and there are over 500 miles of tracks altogether.

The possibilities of air transport have also been greatly improved. There were, eighteen months ago, eight landing-grounds in the five Sultanates in the eastern part of the Protectorate of which only three, Mukalla, Shibam, and Qishn, were used at all frequently. New landing-grounds have been constructed at Tarim, Seiyun, Hureidha, Al 'Abr, 'Azzan, Balhaf, Risib,

18:Ingrams G-3 (1934-36)1938 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

epidemic of malaria, the sequel to the heaviest rains the country had had, according to the old inhabitants, for twenty-two years. It was astonishing to see after a few hours of heavy rain how much damage had been done, for rocks and debris were washed down from the cliff behind the town and the main bazaar street cut across in many places by torrents.

Like every seaport Mukalla is thoroughly cosmopolitan and you find in its bazaars representatives of Arabs from all the coastal parts of South Arabia and the Red Sea and Persian Gulf, as well as Somalis and other Africans. One curious strain of not infrequent visitors are long-bearded Mongolian pilgrims who flourish incomprehensible Chinese passports at me and, speaking no Arabic or other language which can be understood locally, apparently desire onward travel facilities. There are quite a number of Indian visitors and residents too, including Banian shopkeepers, and in the upper layer of Mukalla society the various races, Indian and Arab, mix quite happily. We all attend each other's parties and the Government servants of Mukalla have started a very good club. Amongst the various festive occasions of the last year or so none was greater of course than the Coronation celebrations. The streets and house-tops were gay with flags and I can remember no more beautiful sight than the illuminations at night. The Palace, the Residency, the Government offices and the principal mosques were outlined in coloured lights, and I should think Mukalla that night burnt almost as much incense as Pliny complains of Nero burning at the funeral of Poppaea. Almost every house that had not coloured lights heaped incense in piles along its roof parapets and the coloured lights and the flaming incense were wonderfully reflected on the waters of the harbour, while clouds of smoke filled the streets with a sweet-scented fog and completely obliterated the smell of the fish. Now of course Mukalla is every night reflected in the water, for electric light has been introduced and the greenish glow of the new street lights is visible far away. At the Sultan's request steps are being taken to reorganize and train his forces and to raise and train forces for the Kathiri Sultan, and thanks to Captain Hopkins who has been in Mukalla for nearly six months the standard is already much higher than formerly.

After four until sunset Mukalla walks abroad, sitting either in the cafés on the water front or wandering out through the western gate and sitting in groups above the camel park and the road which leads to the interior. This is the familiar road which has been trodden and described by most of the older generation of travellers, but I suppose that few Europeans in future are likely to follow it on camel or donkey as we did on our first visit three years ago, for I hope it will not be long before the new motor road is finished. The 20 miles or so which are now completed are really a remarkable achievement, for the road is a mountain road, skilfully built up with stone along the hill-sides and well above the torrent beds. The line was followed and mapped by Captain L. G. Beach, R.E., who in a short visit also fixed the latitude and longitude of Shibam and Tarim, but there has been no expert supervision and the builders, all men from Mukalla, have shown themselves extraordinarily skilful.

Nowadays most travellers for the interior go by car, either along the beach to Shihr or, if the beach is not open, along the inland road which

18:Ingrams G-3 (1934-36)1938 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

passes Gheil Ba Wazir, a well-built walled town and the headquarters of the Hamumi tobacco-growing industry. The most skilful diggers of wells and irrigation channels and tunnels come from this place and the system of water which irrigates the tobacco plantations is extremely thorough.

Shihr is an ancient town. Its present walls are not old but there has been a town on this site for at least eight hundred or nine hundred years, and the principal coastal town of the neighbourhood has been hereabouts for a great deal longer. Mukalla of course is much newer. Shihr is an important fishing centre and vast quantities of fish are brought in daily to be sun dried for up-country consumption or eaten fresh locally. Weaving, dyeing, and mat making are minor but locally important industries. About 9 miles from Shihr is Tubala which has been built on a hill over sulphurous springs. This place has won local renown for its sulphur baths and quite a number of rheumatic sufferers have visited it. Hami, farther along the coast, has an even larger number of hot springs, but the picturesque site of Tubala suggests the possibility of a Spa hotel, easily accessible by car from Shihr, and we have rather prematurely considered the positions of the Pump Room and Concert Hall in the Spa Gardens. In view of the progressive ideas of His Highness and the Seiyids in the interior, the provision of a few hotels is not an unlikely development before long, and the country will be an ideal winter resort. Shihr is the principal market for the whole of the eastern Hadhramaut, including all the Kathiri country, and its imports by sea are very considerable, although it is worse off for harbour facilities than Mukalla, as it is nothing but an open roadstead and has no jetties; but apart from the local Aden steamers even ocean-going steamers call there as well as at Mukalla.

Most of the carrying trade is in the hands of the great Hamumi tribe, which has no real villages of its own and extremely few dwelling-houses, but which owns a very large number of camels. The chief of the tribe also owns a great quantity of date palms in different parts of the Hamumi country. I have recently done a considerable amount of flying over Hamumi country which extends over about 3000 square miles and is now well known to the Royal Air Force.

When we first went up the road to Tarim in November 1936 the car road was of course not completed and some 20 miles northwards from Shihr there was a gap which had to be traversed by donkey through Ma'adi, the country of the Ba Hasan Tanbulis who had steadfastly resisted the attempts of Seiyid Bubekr and the Al Kaf family to complete it. These Ba Hasan Tanbulis are allied to the Hamumis and are nicknamed Tanbuli because they are the only people in the whole of the Protectorate who grow betel nut and pepper vine, though Ibn Batuta speaks of it at Dhufar a good deal to the east, and I expect it exists there still. There is nothing much in the countenances of the Ba Hasanis to make you think they are related to the Hamumis, for as a whole the Hamumis are fine-looking men and uncouth is a mild word to describe the general run of Ba Hasanis. Hamumis themselves have said to me that they are not human beings, and an Arab friend, when we were looking at some of the more primitive of them, said to me: "They only want tails and you would say they are monkeys." However they grow on you as I daresay monkeys do after a time, and I am now quite fond of them. When

18:Ingrams G-3 (1934-36)1938 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

coasted westwards along the line just dividing the desert from the steppe; where the larger wadis run out into the sand there were wide stretches of scattered vegetation which made the land look as if there was a green scum on it.

At the western end of the "island," much broken with gulfs and with small islands lying off it in the desert, the flight turned to the south-west, a little to the west of the point which had been reached on the previous day's reconnaissance, and explored the western part of the Sei'ar country, the territory of the Al Hatim of which Bin Jerbu'a and Bin Mulhi are the chiefs. This is the heart of Reidat as Sei'ar, and turned out to be surprisingly thickly populated and cultivated. On almost every bank of the wadis were villages consisting of the usual type of Hadhrami Badawin conglomerate *dars*, with a tall tower in the centre, and small contiguous quarters, each called a *Beit*, clustered round it. Subsequent flights made this country very familiar, and with the aid of a Sei'ar, one of the most intelligent Badawin guides, I was able to identify almost all these *dars*. On several occasions we flew beyond Reidat as Sei'ar over uninhabited steppe to Husn Al 'Abr, seeing on clear days Shabwa away in the distance.

These reconnaissances seemed to us very interesting, not only politically but geographically, for the watershed and the fall of the land, steep towards the Hadhramaut and gradual towards the sands, were clearly visible. Up on this watershed I recorded altitudes of 3600, while 300 miles to the east Mr. Thomas states that the altitude remained fairly constant at about 950 feet. This northern steppe is bounded on three sides by sand and has cliff-walls all round it, highest on the wadi side and lowest on the northern or desert side. At a conservative estimate in some 20 square miles there are not less than fifty to sixty Sei'ar villages which have scarcely even been visited by Arabs other than the Sei'ar and the Al Ishaq Sheikhs who live among them.

Some time after these reconnaissances my wife and I visited Al 'Abr on the ground, though she in fact went rather farther and drove some 20 miles towards Shabwa, a day and a half's camel ride from Al 'Abr. We have thus seen the whole of the Wadi Hadhramaut from its source to the sea, and the more you see of it the more extraordinary it is, for it must be at least 40 miles from its northern or left to its southern or right banks at Al 'Abr. This of course narrows very rapidly to 4 miles or so at Henin. It was from Henin that Seiyid Bubekr and I set out for Al 'Abr, following for a start the tracks which Dr. Pike, on a geological survey, had made in that direction. The tracks made by Mr. Philby had of course disappeared.

Our object was to obtain the looted camels of the Manahils, held by the Al 'Abdulla bin 'Aun of the Sei'ar at Al 'Abr. We had with us the fifteen slave soldiers of the Qu'aiti Regular Army who were to be installed there as a garrison, and as we did not want the Al 'Abdulla bin 'Aun to abscond into the desert with the camels, we had kept our movements secret. Seiyid Bubekr said his sunset prayers at Henin. The lorries had gone ahead and had made very slow progress as they had had heavy sand to negotiate. It was difficult finding the way in the dark, but we caught them up at half-past eight, and all of us sat down to dine together, just near the village of Sur and under the two mountains called Thukmein which form a conspicuous landmark from the air for a radius of 70 or 80 miles around. This was 27 miles from Henin,

18:Ingrams G-3 (1934-36)1938 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

and we were in country with which there had been practically no contact It must really have been alarming to the Badawin: a noisy party in lorries, which they had not seen before, and ourselves in cars, shouting directions to each other in the night and firing Verey lights to show each other the way; but the Badawin materialized out of the darkness, most surprisingly without rifles, directed us time and again on our way, and pushed our cars out of the sand.

After Thukmein, which we left about half-past eleven, we had no great difficulty in moving on as the moon was up. We drove on for some hours and then stopped to let the rest of the party come up. It was bitterly cold and the keen wind cut through us as we huddled together trying to sleep on the sand, but we did sleep and woke to a marvellous dawn. The sunset of the night before, the brilliant moon, and the sunrise are three enduring memories of that night.

The four flat-topped hills of Al 'Abr lay about 10 miles ahead of us, and although only one of the lorries had come on, the other having had one of its many breakdowns, we decided to go on. It was marvellous hard sand on which a speed of fifty was easy and we had quickly left the lorry behind. We made our way into the wadi bed, myself acting as guide as I was the only one who knew the country even from the air. There were one or two Bureiki Sheikhs about with camels, and rather reluctantly they told us that the 'Abdulla bin 'Aun were also there with the camels. A few minutes' driving up the hard wadi brought us to the ruins of the fort, said by the Al 'Abdulla bin 'Aun to have been built by them.

The dozen or so Badawin round the well looked extremely surprised when the car drew up. I suppose they were hardly awake, as the morning was still chilly and they were all wearing their sheepskin coats. A few Bureiki Sheikhs came down and bade us welcome. All the rest of the Badawin claimed to belong to every tribe except the 'Abdulla bin 'Aun. Some said they were Sheikhs, some claimed to be Daham, a Yemeni tribe, and some Nahd, but there were a good many shifty looks and in the course of the morning we sorted out nine who had given themselves away and who finally admitted to belonging to this raiding section. There are only forty-three males all told of the 'Abdulla bin 'Aun, but from the amount of trouble they had given in the past it was well worth getting them under control. They have no houses or settled habitation and are about the only people of the Hadhramaut who have goatskin tents. They are part of the Al Hatim, but Bin Mulhi, their chief, says he has no control over them and the Sei'ar themselves were delighted when we took hostages from them and put in a garrison, whose function is to protect the travellers and not to interfere in other ways.

Presently the lorries came up and I installed the wireless and settled the garrison into temporary quarters. There was nothing at Al 'Abr except the ruined fort of which only one wall still stood, a small stone *murabba'a*, one of the dark cube-shaped shelters used by travellers all over the Hadhramaut, and a hut built of branches of trees and grass of which there was a great profusion. There was also a new *weli's* tomb decorated with ibex horns, and one of the Bureiki Sheikhs took us there and slapping the tomb addressed its lately canonized occupant and introduced us. We put the garrison into the

24:Meulen and Wissmann T-3 (1931)1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

of the city. Before the gate is the Wādī Seded, where the sea has penetrated far inland and formed an inlet. Here on the beach the caravans camp as they travel to and from the interior. Hundreds of camels are kneeling in great circles, eating the food that lies in the centre. Other camels are being bathed and scrubbed down with sea-water, while still others are protesting with gurgling snarls against the treatment of some skin trouble or of big open wounds. There are donkeys here and there amongst them. Bedouins lie asleep wrapped about in their cloaks or sit round a small fire eating out of wooden bowls their porridge of crumbled bread mixed up with a little fat. Some are busy with the difficult work of loading: after the freights have been weighed by lifting and then divided, they are fastened on to the pack-saddles. Children are collecting into baskets the camel's dung which is of great value as fuel. The ground is swarming with the so-called camel-louse, which is really a sort of tick. The penetrating odour of the camels' urine and sweat hangs over this wide-spread, permanent bivouac.

We go inland along the bank of the Wādī Seded, which is here filled with sea-water, so as to cross, by making a big bend, behind the 1800 feet high rocky ridge of Makalla. On the left of the road, only a few miles from Makalla, there are groves of palm, with the white summer quarters of the Vizier and of the Sultan. Here is a spring from which, by means of a thin, iron pipe lying on the ground, water is carried to Makalla to provide the town with drink.

Two hamlets, el-Baqrēn and Baqērēn, with some cultivated fields, lie close to the frontier of the Sultanate of Makalla. There are two fortified towers on the road manned by soldiers, and not far beyond Baqērēn there stands a whitewashed piece of rock. Against the high wall of primary rock, rising up each side of the road, two white marks have been made to show even in the mountain region, where the land is at peace and where at war. No vendetta may be carried on nor ancient feuds settled by arms in or around the town.

24: Meulen and Wissmann T-3 (1931)1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

8. APPROACHING WĀDĪ DŌ'AN.

We notice that we are approaching the great *'aqaba* leading to Wādī Dō'an; some long caravans with rice from Makalla pass us, and about twenty villagers on donkeys, bound for Makalla, come towards us. We start off again at half past three, crossing the dry, high table-land, with a distant horizon vanishing into a blue mist, against which are outlined the low, far-stretching mountain plateaus — an extraordinarily monotonous, colourless and formless landscape. The next day, when we descend into Wādī Dō'an, we shall take leave of it for a while. Thus it will be the last night of bivouac with our Sēbānī people.

At Ḥumḥār we camped behind the edge of a plateau, where there was some shelter from the wind. On the way, after some bargaining, our men have bought a sheep. The prospect of the feast reduces them to such confusion of mind that they unload the camels some distance from us. We notice this too late, but try to insist that they shall reload them; however, we have finally to content ourselves with the promise that they will carry to our camping place the pieces of luggage that we need. They let us wait: the sheep is killed and made ready and they all go out to collect the firewood and it almost seems as if they will take no further trouble about us. To avoid this, Ṣāliḥ and the soldiers carry all the Bedouins' food away to the spot where we have established ourselves. We wait in suspense to see what will happen! The Sēbānīs return from all directions, throw their wood in a great pile and light a fire, which is to heat the stones upon which the meat will shortly be roasted. Meanwhile, when they want to prepare the dough for the bread, they discover that all the food has disappeared. The merry excitement abruptly ceases, and, after a moment of amazement, indignation bursts forth in effervescence. Mautor approaches us with two companions to demand the return of their food supplies. They speak first with our soldiers and with Ṣāliḥ, who treat them to a torrent of reproaches, but

24:Meulen and Wissmann T-3 (1931)1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

361 Small towns, little more than groups of tall mud houses, of the same brown colour as the ground beneath them, stand close up against the steep slopes of rock débris. No sound from below rises to us, no trace of life can be espied; Wādī Dō'an lies there between its high rocky banks, safely shut off from the world, like an unreal, forgotten bit of paradise waiting for the Day of Judgment. This is the reward of weary travellers in the desert. We are filled with joy. We stand, lost in admiration, on the borders of our "land of promise". We have not dared, nor been able, to think of it as being so beautiful. And this is not yet Ḥaḍramaut Proper, although it is, in fact, its outer gateway. Alone we stand on the border of the precipice and silently work our cameras. In spite of the heat, we cannot tear ourselves away from the spell cast by this valley full of fertility and beauty, in the midst of an endless desert of barren rock and stone.

484 Meanwhile the camels have arrived at the *'aqaba* and have been unloaded. The beasts must be thoroughly rested before the difficult descent can be risked. Seen from above, it looks impossible for animals, whose feet seem to have been created for the plains, to be able to climb down, especially when burdened with heavy loads. Nevertheless, the Sēbān Bedouins know their high table-lands and *'aqabas* and the capacity of their camels. It is not often that a camel has an accident on an *'aqaba*. The animals are now divided into groups of three with a Bedouin in front. They seem to know what awaits them, for the plaintive, anxious, guttural sounds continue without stopping. Many cries and, finally, many scoldings from the leader are required to induce them to move. Traffic between Makalla and Ḥaḍramaut passes for a great part over this *'aqaba*. There are other ways and there is also a direct route from Shibām, but it is easy to see on this path that the feet of thousands and thousands of camels have helped to polish the rock. When the path becomes very narrow and steep and the camels hesitate, the leader speaks words of encouragement to them: their singsong cries of warning and of cheer echo con-

24:Meulen and Wissmann T-3 (1931)1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

tinually along the wall of rock. They move slowly and very cautiously, and the whole caravan reaches the bottom of the wādī without mishap.

The advance guard with the donkeys has long since arrived. A crowd of boys stands waiting for us, and in the background, in the shadow of the date-palms, there are a number of women, who do not wish to let slip this chance of seeing Naṣrānīs. The Governor, Bā Ṣurra, has sent a few soldiers to show us the way to his castle. They look like Yemenīs and, indeed, come from the western highlands. The villages and towns are situated close up against the slopes of débris above the cultivated fields. The houses are high and well built, often against steep inclines. Only a few of the rich have allowed themselves the luxury of a whitewashed top storey. The path winds through date-groves to the *maṣnaᶜa*, the castle of the *Dōla* (Government). The date-palms are strong, fine trees; heavy clusters of yellow and red dates hang downwards from their crowns. Each tree is surrounded by a mud wall, so that, when the *sēl* comes, the roots are not washed bare, and a considerable amount of water is kept inside the little wall. Even in the deeply shaded plantations our feet sink in a thick layer of dust as fine as powder, for there has been no *sēl* for a long time.

2. BĀ ṢURRA, THE GOVERNOR OF WĀDĪ DŌ'AN.

The path leads steeply upwards through the village of el-Maṣnaᶜa to the castle, which stands on the top of a rock high above all the other houses. It looks like a great mediaeval fortress with corner-towers, heavy triple gates, with stables, soldiers' quarters, halls and living-rooms. The stout wooden gates are magnificently carved, and decorated with metal plates and nail-heads. The first gate is opened by a guard of soldiers. We pass through a passage to the second gate, and then through a stable, past some calves, to the third. Then we are led through a hall, full of soldiers, to a narrower one, really

24:Meulen and Wissmann T-3 (1931)1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

the Ghumdān appear to be of recent date. The well is also found, and plucky Sayyid ʿAlī has the daring to go down into it, in spite of the gruesome tales of snakes and other monsters which are said to haunt its depths. The pit appears to be a shaft of karst about 90 feet in depth; in the lower part of it there is a transverse passage into which Sayyid ʿAlī penetrates over a few yards, with a loaded revolver in his hand. Then the squeaking of bats fluttering around him becomes too much for him and he returns to the shaft, where Von Wissmann has followed him. No traces of human activity nor of hidden treasures can be detected by the light of their electric torches. Both of them climb up again out of the pit without mishap, but with great effort.

Henceforth Sayyid ʿAlī feels drawn to Von Wissmann by the friendship of admiration. Of course he wishes to go with us into the valley of Ḥaḍramaut to the great Sayyid el-Kāf in Terīm and then to accompany us further to Qabr Hūd, there, with his friend "Ḥarmal" (corruption of Hermann, see p. 47), to explore the mysterious Bīr Barhūt. He who dared the descent of Bīr Ghumdān shall also venture the hell's mouth of Barhūt, and the name of Sayyid ʿAlī shall be handed down in honour for generations in the annals of Ḥaḍramaut. Drunken with pride and joy Sayyid ʿAlī accompanies Von Wissmann through the darkness back to Ḥurēḍa. He relates his tale, which grows ever finer in the telling, until deep into the night. My companion's fame precedes him into Ḥaḍramaut. Sayyid ʿAlī will introduce him with pride: "Ḥarmal, the German airman (look at his knee that has been shot away), the man who fears no height nor depth."

On the morning of May 22nd we have another invitation, this time to take tea with Sayyid Ṭālib, who is introduced as the Sindbad of Ḥaḍramaut. He has travelled pretty well all over the Islamic world, where as a sayyid and son of a race of theologians he was everywhere welcome, and he has returned wealthy from his travels. This Sindbad's beautiful house is jestingly called "the little Yildiz". He is old by now, but listens

24:Meulen and Wissmann T-3 (1931)1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

with amusement while his younger guests relate how, every year, he marries the prettiest girl to be found in Ḥurēḍa. We perfume ourselves with incense, the host doing so the most thoroughly of us all. He keeps the smoking censer under the wide folds of his garment. The tea with dishes of a confection of ginger is served. Sindbad, with his crafty face framed in a white beard, the extreme points of which are dyed orange with *ḥinnā*ᵓ, tells about his travels. The youthful audience feasts upon the witty tales of this enjoyer of life — a vanishing figure of the typical sayyid society of Ḥaḍramaut.

We exchange keepsakes with Sayyid Ḥasan el-ᶜAṭṭās in lasting remembrance of our visit to Ḥurēḍa. The lavish, kind welcome given us and the friendly feeling shown us here have smoothed the way for us through Ḥaḍramaut.

24:Meulen and Wissmann T-3 (1931)1932 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

forces with a caravan. These only go every fortnight or three weeks, but if we had the patience to wait we should then travel with 200 to 300 camels and a strong escort. But we have no time and cannot wait and must try the circuitous route by way of Wādī ᶜAmd. As we do not relish the idea of staying in this crammed castle with its sick chief and as we have also a feeling that we are not so very welcome here, we ask permission to go and stay for the night in Diyār Āl Buqrī where we had such pleasant experiences on our journey inland. Our travelling companions, the Sayyids ᶜAluwī and ᶜAlī el-ᶜAṭṭās, who know that Diyār Āl Buqrī is much richer than el-Qaᶜūẓa and that a feast will most certainly be prepared for us there, are also attracted to this prospect by the pangs of hunger. We send a messenger in advance to announce our arrival, having first, from the roof of the house, estimated the distance as a walk of from fifteen to twenty minutes.

2. THROUGH TRENCHES FROM ONE BESIEGED CASTLE TO ANOTHER.

Shortly after sundown we set out, a guide goes in front, then follows a camel with our baggage, then we ourselves. The whole garrison accompanies us as far as the gate. Under the covering protection of the castle we go towards a wide, deep trench, which will lead us by a roundabout way to Diyār Āl Buqrī. The enemy outposts appear to have espied us, bullets come in our direction from the rocky plateau above and our escort hurries us on. The trench has many turnings and also side branches and positions made strong with the trunks of palms. Its dimensions are such that it can safely be used by a caravan of camels. For an hour and a half we wade through the loose sand of the winding trench and then reach a region of sand-dunes where our guide loses his way in the pitch darkness; frequently we have to wait whilst he goes on ahead.

camels for the expedition to el-Ḥōṭa. The heat keeps people indoors during the day-time, now that there is nothing to be done in the gardens. Yebᶜeth seems to suffer badly from the long-continued drought. The date-palms had had too little water and had borne no fruit; the grove of vigourous *nibq* trees on the well-tilled fields was bare and colourless. The light-brown loam soil of the wādī must be very fertile. The villages built on hills at the base of the gently sloping bank of the wādī, have an appearance of prosperity. The houses are built of pieces of rough stone, dark, almost black in colour and bound with mud; there is generally one high square house which can do service as a tower for defence. Saᶜīd took us to el-Qarn, to the house of Shēkh Abū Bakr, for whom we had a letter of introduction from the sons of Shēkh ᶜUthmān at Rēdet ed-Deyyin. His house was shabby, but he gave us a kind reception, set before us dates, some bread and a little piece of salt fish, but informed us at the same time that we should have to wait for at least two or three days for camels and, especially, for *siyāras* (responsible guides) to accompany us to el-Ḥōṭa. The district through which we were to pass was very dangerous: quite recently people had been robbed and murdered there. Not until a caravan had come in and was ready to leave again could we join it and go on our way, as no one would run the risk of guiding us through that region without the protection of a caravan. We could not afford to wait for days on such an uncertain chance. For a few hours we deliberated and sought other advice, but no one made a satisfactory proposal, and meanwhile Ṣāliḥ had come to me whispering that we ought not to stay, as the people of the place were *not* well disposed towards us. A sojourn of days in this miserable dwelling, where we were already in the day-time plagued by bugs, was not attractive. The faithful Saᶜīd, who seemed convinced that we were in danger here, offered to take us on as far as Ṣidāra, in Wādī Ḥadjr, with his own camels, if we could find just one guide to show us the way. It was at this stage that we gave up the

30: Gt. Britain G-5 (ca. 1918) 1920 MJ1 Saudi Arabia
Hadhramaut MM2

though owning a large proportion of the land, they employ slaves or hired labourers to cultivate it. As compared with the other classes, they are well educated, are strict in their religious observances, and, owing to the respect due to their descent, they exercise a strong influence both in temporal and spiritual matters.

The *Tribesmen*, as in Arabia generally, are the most interesting part of the Hadhramaut population and are the predominant class. All the adults carry arms. Some of the tribes have settled towns; others lead a nomadic life, keeping, however, within their own recognized territory. They are divided into families, each headed by a chief or Abu, while the head of the tribe is known as the Muqaddam, or tribal lord. Though the tribesmen are not his subjects, he is their leader in war or peace; he can rule only with their support, and his authority depends largely on his personality. For the distribution, numbers, and influence of the principal tribes, see the section 'Government', (p. 229 f.).

The *Townsmen* are the free inhabitants of the towns and villages as distinguished from the Seyyids and the tribesmen; they do not carry arms, but are the working members of the community, merchants, citizens, cultivators, and servants, and are entirely dependent on the tribes and chiefs under whose protection they live. It is to be noted that taxes fall almost exclusively on them.

The *Servile class* contains a large African element, brought over formerly when the slave trade flourished on this coast. They follow the profession of their masters, i. e. the slaves of a member of a tribe carry arms or cultivate the fields; those of a townsman follow the occupation of the master. As in all Mohammedan countries, they are generally well treated and often rise to positions of trust.

A large number of Arabs from Hadhramaut go abroad, the Kathīri especially being enterprising travellers; many of the Ka'aiti take service in the irregular troops of Haidarabad, and emigration to the Dutch colonies in Java and Sumatra has also gone on since the beginning of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, a large number of Parsee and British-Indian traders have established themselves in the Hadhramaut ports, which carry on a considerable coasting trade with the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

Domestic Life and Appliances

The houses in the Hadhramaut are often well ventilated and comparatively clean. A feature that first strikes the traveller is the form and character of the larger houses of well-to-do townsmen. Often several storeys in height, they are mainly built of